

Philadelphia, PA -- On Saturday, February 24, Congressman Joe Sestak addressed the 2007 Annual Lunar New Year Banquet, which was entitled: "Embracing the Hopes and Aspirations of Asian Pacific Americans."

"I was proud to ring in the New Year with so many friends at this year's Lunar New Year Banquet," noted Joe. "I wish everyone in the Chinese community a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year, and I am honored to be a part of this year's festivities. The Asian Pacific American community has a rich heritage of culture and tradition and has been instrumental in the advancement of our society."

The event took place at the H.K. Golden Phoenix Restaurant. The Mistress of Ceremonies of the event was Cynthia Guow, Emmy Award-winning television news anchor and journalist and host of Philadelphia's "Asian Outlook."

During his remarks, Joe also spoke on many of the issues he ran-on, including the need for comprehensive immigration reform and the need for affordable health care.

"As the son of an immigrant, I believe the richness of our country is based on our immigrant heritage," added Joe. "But, our immigration system is broken and needs to be fixed. I support comprehensive immigration reform that respects that heritage, provides for our security, and streamlines the process through which people can legally come into the country.

"We need smart measures, such as unmanned vehicles and motion detectors, to secure our borders both from illegal immigration as well as drug smugglers and terrorists. I do not support amnesty. However, undocumented immigrants who are currently in the country and who have first paid a fine, paid 'back taxes,' consistently held a job, and have learned English should be allowed to work towards naturalization."

Chinese months are reckoned by the lunar calendar, with each month beginning on the darkest day. New Year festivities traditionally start on the first day of the month and continue until the fifteenth, when the moon is brightest.

This is the Year of the Pig. Those born during the Year of the Pig are highly regarded for their chivalry and pureness of heart, and they often make friends for life.

Founded in 1973 as the Organization of Chinese Americans, OCA is a national organization dedicated to advancing the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Pacific Americans

in the United States.

*Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever to serve in the U.S. Congress.*

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